

Amendments To Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A system for communication, comprising:

a set of one or more rich media environments each having a corresponding arrangement of sensing and rendering components for covering a set of individuals present in the corresponding rich media environment;

interest thread detector that uses the sensing and rendering components to detect multiple communication interactions among ~~a set of~~ the individuals present in the rich media environments and that maintains an interest thread for each communication interaction;

communication provider that for each interest thread captures a set of media data from the sensing components and that combines the captured media data in response to the activities of a subset of the individuals associated with the interest thread and that communicates the combined media data to the rendering components.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the communication provider selects a subset of the sensing and rendering components for use for each interest thread.

3. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the activities include speech levels of the individuals.

4. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the activities include gestures by the individuals.

5. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the activities include movements by the individuals.

6. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the activities include locations of the individuals.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the communication provider refines the media data obtained from the sensor components in response to the activities.
8. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the communication provider stores the combined media data to provide a history of the corresponding communication interaction.
9. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein one or more of the communication interactions pertain to an artifact in one of the rich media environments.
10. (Original) The system of claim 9, wherein the artifact changes over time.
11. (Original) The system of claim 9, wherein the artifact is a shared virtual writing surface.
12. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein a change to the artifact is made by one of the individuals.
13. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein the communication provider records a history of the artifact over time.
14. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the interest thread detector detects one or more activities in the rich media environments and creates an interest area for each detected activity.
15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the interest thread detector associates the interest areas with the interest threads.

16. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein one or more of the communication interactions is among two or more of the individuals in one of the rich media environments.

17. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein one or more of the communication interactions is among one or more of the individuals in two or more of the rich media environments.

18. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the interest thread detector detects formation of a particular communication interaction by detecting a movement of one of the individuals.

19. (Original) The system of claim 18, wherein the movement pertains to one of the rendering devices.

20. (Original) The system of claim 18, wherein the movement pertains to one of the other individuals.

21. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein one or more of individuals is in a remote location and in possession of a remote sensing and rendering component.

22. (Currently Amended) A method for communication using a set of rich media environments each having a corresponding arrangement of sensing and rendering components for covering a set of individuals present in the corresponding rich media environment, comprising ~~the steps of:~~

detecting multiple communication interactions among ~~a set of the~~ individuals present in the rich media environments;

maintaining an interest thread for each detected communication interaction;

capturing a set of media data from the sensing components;

combining the captured media data in response to the activities of a subset of the individuals associated with each interest thread;

communicating the combined media data to the rendering components.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, further comprising ~~the step of~~ selecting a subset of the sensing and rendering components for use for each interest thread.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 44, wherein ~~the step of~~ combining the captured media data in response to the activities of the individuals includes ~~the step of~~ detecting speech levels of the individuals.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, wherein ~~the step of~~ combining the captured media data in response to the activities of the individuals includes ~~the step of~~ detecting gestures by the individuals.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, wherein ~~the step of~~ combining the captured media data in response to the activities of the individuals includes ~~the step of~~ detecting movements by the individuals.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, wherein ~~the step of~~ combining the captured media data in response to the activities of the individuals includes ~~the step of~~ detecting locations of the individuals.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, further comprising ~~the step of~~ refining the media data obtained from the sensor components in response to the activities.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, further

comprising ~~the step of~~ storing the combined media data in a history of the corresponding communication interaction.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, further comprising ~~the step of~~ monitoring an artifact over time.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30, further comprising ~~the step of~~ recording a history of the artifact over time.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, further comprising ~~the steps of~~ detecting one or more activities in the rich media environments and creating an interest area for each detected activity.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, further comprising ~~the step of~~ associating the interest areas with the interest threads.

34. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage media that contains a set of code that when executed provides communication among a set of rich media environments each having a corresponding arrangement of sensing and rendering components for covering a set of individuals present in the corresponding rich media environment by ~~performing the steps of~~:

detecting multiple communication interactions among ~~a set of~~ the individuals present in the rich media environments;

maintaining an interest thread for each detected communication interaction;

capturing a set of media data from the sensing components;

combining the captured media data in response to the activities of a subset of the individuals associated with each interest thread;

communicating the combined media data to the rendering components.

35. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, further comprising ~~the step of~~ selecting a subset of the sensing and rendering components for use for each interest thread.

36. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, wherein ~~the step of~~ combining the captured media data in response to the activities of the individuals includes ~~the step of~~ detecting speech levels of the individuals.

37. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, wherein ~~the step of~~ combining the captured media data in response to the activities of the individuals includes ~~the step of~~ detecting gestures by the individuals.

38. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, wherein ~~the step of~~ combining the captured media data in response to the activities of the individuals includes ~~the step of~~ detecting movements by the individuals.

39. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, wherein ~~the step of~~ combining the captured media data in response to the activities of the individuals includes ~~the step of~~ detecting locations of the individuals.

40. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, further comprising ~~the step of~~ refining the media data obtained from the sensor components in response to the activities.

41. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, further comprising ~~the step of~~ storing the

combined media data in a history of the corresponding communication interaction.

42. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, further comprising ~~the step of~~ monitoring an artifact over time.

43. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 42, further comprising ~~the step of~~ recording a history of the artifact over time.

44. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 34, further comprising ~~the steps of~~ detecting one or more activities in the rich media environments and creating an interest area for each detected activity.

45. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage media of claim 44, further comprising ~~the step of~~ associating the interest areas with the interest threads.